

Wireless Connectivity Stipend Policy

3.27.2012

The University of Alabama, College of Arts and Sciences may provide a wireless connectivity stipend to an employee who has a documented official University business need for a communication device and continues to meet eligibility requirements as outlined below. This includes department chairs, center directors, and individuals identified by the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

The wireless connectivity stipend is intended to reimburse the employee for the business use of the device. The stipend is not intended to fund the cost of the device nor pay for the entire monthly bill. The assumption is that most employees also use their wireless communication devices for personal calls as well.

Stipend Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for the wireless connectivity stipend, the employee must have a business need, defined and approved by the supervisor or Dean's office that includes one or more of the following:

- The primary duties of the employee fulfill a critical mission to the administration of the College of Arts and Sciences.
- The employee's job requires that they need to be immediately accessible outside of normal business hours.
- The employee is responsible for critical infrastructure and needs to be immediately accessible at all times.

Eligible employees include department chairs, center directors, and individuals identified by the Dean. An employee's wireless stipend may cease if their duties change in a way that no longer makes them eligible, if the employee transfers to a position outside of the College of Arts and Sciences, or if an employee no longer works at the University.

Reporting Wireless Connectivity Stipend

The wireless stipend does not constitute an increase to base pay, nor will it be included in the calculation and percentage increases to base pay due to raises, job upgrades, retirement, or other compensation increases. The stipend will be itemized in pay stubs, reported on employees' W-2s and subject to withholding taxes.

The determination of the stipend amount covers the employee's projected business-related expenses only. Eligibility for the allowance or level of the allowance provide is subject to change or cancellation without notice.

Responsibilities for Employees Receiving Stipend

When a wireless connectivity stipend has been approved, the employee must comply with the following:

- The employee will provide a phone number to the Dean's office while requesting the wireless connectivity stipend.
- If the employee is using the stipend for a cell phone, the employee will have the phone turned on and in possession during the times specified by the Dean's office.
- The employee may select any cell phone wireless carrier whose service meets the requirements of the job responsibilities as determined by the Dean's office. (Verizon is currently the only choice for wireless carrier with Arts and Science iPads)
- The employee must inform the Dean's office if the wireless services have been cancelled. The Dean's office may periodically request that the employee provide a copy of the first page of the wireless bill to verify that the wireless plan is still active. The Dean's office may also request documentation of substantial business use. The employee will be responsible for all charges on his/her wireless plan.
- The employee is responsible for complying with international, federal, state, and municipal laws regarding the use of wireless phones and other communication devices while driving. Under no circumstances will The University of Alabama be liable for non-compliance.
- The employee should use discretion when relaying confidential information over wireless devices since transmissions are not secure. The employee will be responsible for any fees associated with a change or termination of the contract caused by a personal decision by the employee, employee misconduct, involuntary termination, or misuse of the device or service. The College of Arts and Sciences will bear such costs in the event the termination of the employee's service provider contract is required due to a change in University policy or other reasons unrelated to the employee's conduct or status.

The employee will not need to maintain a log for business and personal use if receiving a wireless stipend.

Security

The College of Arts and Sciences reserves the right to require any mobile device accessing the University's infrastructure to be subject to future mobile device security policies and guidelines as established by the University's Information Security Office and IT governance structure. This applies to both University and personally owned devices.

Security policies may include device requirements for mobile anti-virus/spyware, mobile firewall, secure communications, encrypted file folders including storage cards, strong passwords, two factor authentication, and/or destruction and disabling in the event of a lost or stolen device. Costs for any mobile security measures will become the financial responsibility of the department and/or the individual owner of the device at the time such requirements become University policy.

Support

Users who are authorized to use a work cell phone without data access must obtain technical support from the vendor providing the phone. OIT will assist with email and calendar synchronization provided that the user receives the wireless connectivity stipend.

Note: Before OIT can provide support, you must be able to make/receive calls and browse the internet with your device. If you cannot do both of these things, you must contact your carrier to resolve the issue before bringing it to OIT.

Additional Information

Extraordinary business use of an employee's personal wireless device in excess of the monthly stipend can be reimbursed with appropriate documentation and approval. This may require approval from the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

Misuse or fraudulent receipt of a wireless connectivity stipend may result in progressive administrative and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and criminal prosecution.

N.B.: If the stipend exceeds the monthly phone and/or data plan, then the employee will only be reimbursed for the actual amount paid. Employee will be required to occasionally submit a copy of the stipend portion of the phone bill to their department and the Financial department to verify account activity.

Employee Responsibilities

The employee receiving an allowance must provide to the Dean's Office the number to the communication device and a copy of the wireless contract when applying for the stipend.

The employee is personally liable for contract stipulations with carrier including payment of all expenses incurred (including long distance, roaming fees and taxes). In the event that an employee leaves the position that qualified for the allowance, he/she continues to be responsible for the contractual obligations of the communication device carrier.

The employee receiving an allowance must notify the Dean's Office and eTech within five working days of the inactivation of the communication service. In the event the device is lost or stolen, the employee must contact the University of Alabama Police Department in addition to the department chair and eTech.

The employee receiving an allowance from The College of Arts and Sciences may not receive additional reimbursement from The University of Alabama for use of communication device or service.

No arrearages or partial months will be paid.

No hotel telephone reimbursements will be given to employees who have phone stipends.

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Any international phone/data usage while travelling must be preapproved for reimbursement and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Information to be provided to the College of Arts and Sciences per the following scenarios:

- Cancel UA wireless contract: provide cell phone number and permission from the Dean's Office to cancel.
- Porting UA wireless contract cell phone number to another carrier: provide cell phone number and permission from the Dean's Office to port the number.
- Convert UA wireless contract to personal contract with the same carrier: provide cell phone number, if applicable, and permission from the Dean's Office to convert and complete and return Employee Assumption of Liability (AOL) form to Telecommunications office for signature. (Obtain AOL form by emailing: Stiteler@ua.edu)
- As a security measure, employee acknowledges the University may be called upon to "wipe" all data from the device, in the event that it is lost, stolen, or employee is terminated. Such a "wipe" may include data beyond the data stored on the University servers, including personal photos, communications, etc. Employee consents to such a "wipe" and waives any claims related to the same.

Effective October 1, 2010, the University servers are set to archive and track only interactions with the University outlook account (contacts, calendar, UA email). The University does not track or archive text messages or phone logs.